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# China: Views on Nuclear Arms Control (U)

A Defense Research Assessment



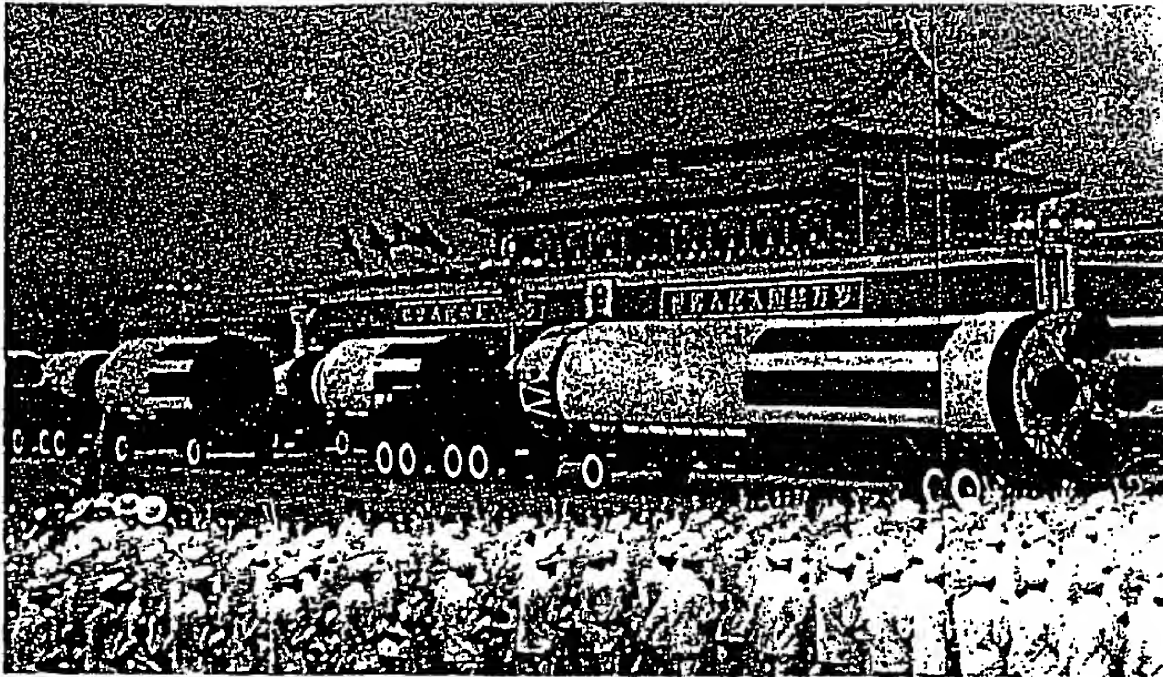
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"All types of advanced strategic guided missiles, which resemble long swords, one after the other, resting against the heavens, are inlaid in the long moving columns that pass in review; this is a review of our military strategic nuclear counterattack capability; furthermore, it is a demonstration of resolute belief in safeguarding world peace."

"Belief in Strength," *Jiefangjun Huabao*  
(*Liberation Army Pictorial*) No. 449, November 1984.  
Coverage of 35th Anniversary National Day Parade

(1) In the past, one defining criterion of major power status was the ability to defend oneself alone against any other single power. In the nuclear age, this has been transformed into the ability to deter attack by possessing nuclear weapons for retaliation. However, in a system dominated by "superpowers" - nuclear powers able to destroy any attacker regardless of the conditions of attack - major powers (even if nuclear armed) do not carry the former weight. Nonetheless, a survivable nuclear deterrent allows a major power to pursue independent policies and maintain its own client relationships.



Hu Yaobang

Deng Xiaoping

Following is an excerpt from an August 1980 interview of Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping, by Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci.

The Soviet Union speaks every day about disarmament, but actually, it increases its armaments every day. Not only do they have so many atom bombs, I think conventional weapons are piled up in their warehouses. These things are not for eating or wearing; why are they piled up there?

Following is an excerpt from the Report to the Twelfth National Congress of the Communist Party of China, 1 September 1982, by Secretary-General Hu Yaobang.

The most important task for the people of the world today is to oppose hegemonism and safeguard world peace. Due to the rivalry between the superpowers, the danger of a world war is growing ever greater. However, experience shows that the people of the world, by persevering in struggle, can upset the strategic plans of the superpowers. World peace can be safeguarded, provided that the people truly unite and fight resolutely against all expressions of hegemonism and expansionism. We have always firmly opposed the arms race between the superpowers, stood for the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons and for their complete destruction and demanded that the superpowers be the first to cut their nuclear and conventional arsenals drastically.

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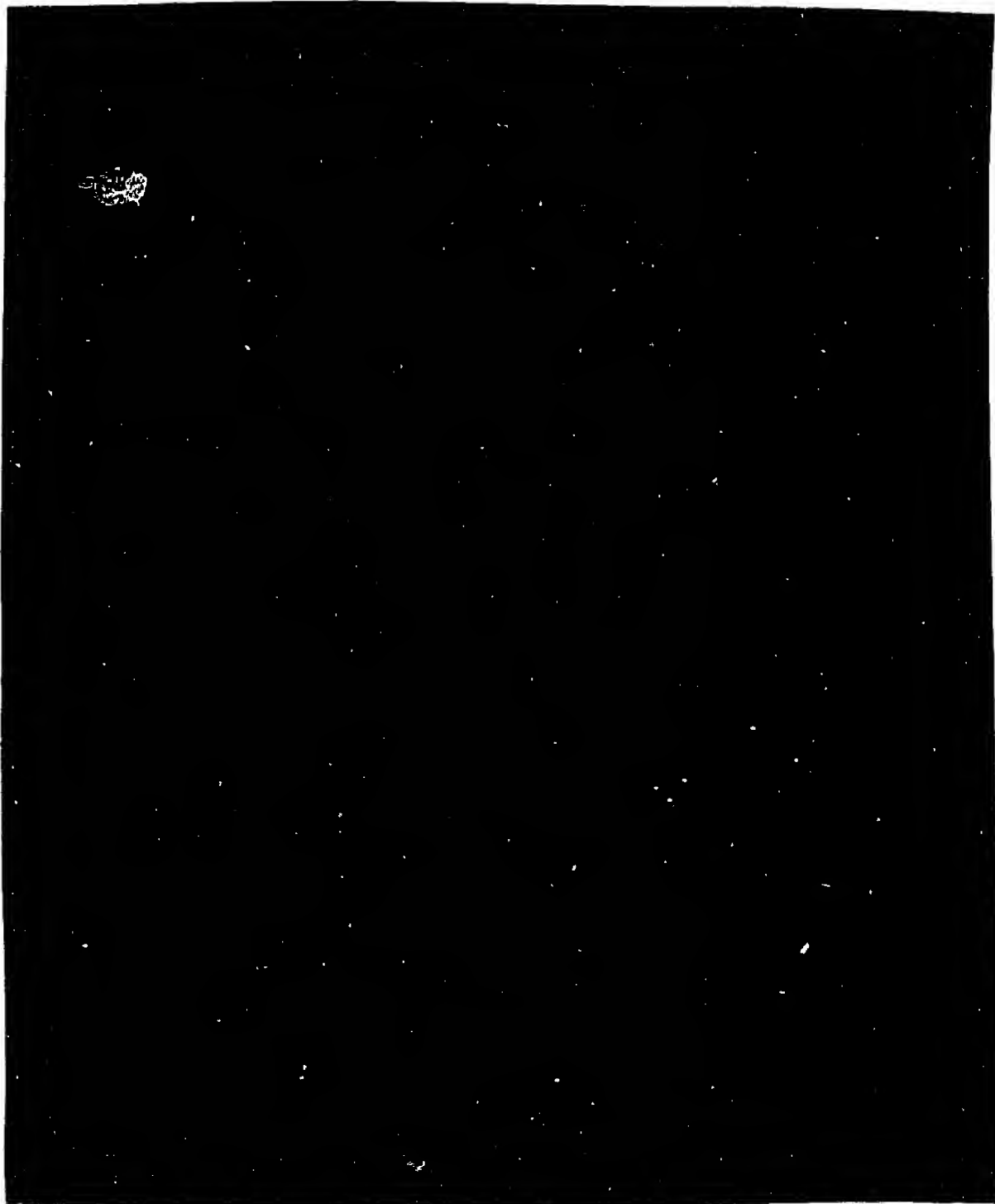
**Evolution of China's Arms Control and Disarmament Policy**

(U) When the Chinese exploded their first nuclear device on 16 October 1964, they launched a major publicity campaign stressing three points: 1) China's purpose in developing nuclear weapons was "to break the superpower monopoly," 2) China would never be the first to use nuclear weapons, and 3) all nuclear weapons should be eliminated worldwide.


<sup>2</sup> (U) "Sovereignty" is a very emotionally loaded term for the Chinese. China will respond sharply to any suggestion that it does not have a right to do a thing that some other nation does. The mere mention of the word evokes a bitter history of 19th and 20th century Western, then Japanese, then Soviet domination of China, including the alienation by force of territory the Chinese feel is legally theirs — especially Taiwan and the offshore islands. Through much of that history of domination, China was nominally independent, although foreign powers dictated or directly controlled China's domestic and foreign economic activity, revenue systems, transportation, defense establishment, and even diplomacy.

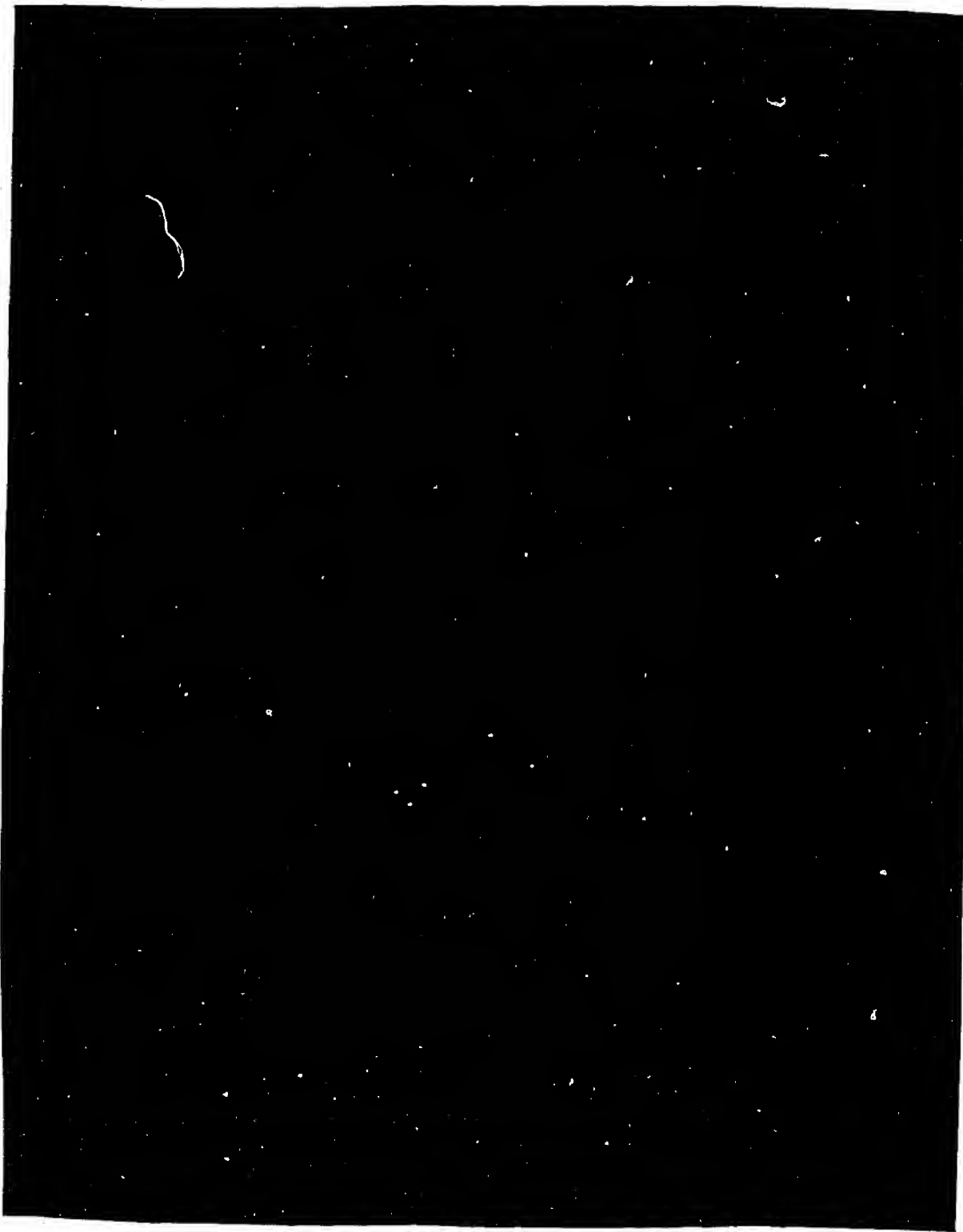
<sup>3</sup> (U) See, for instance, Beijing Xinhua, 15 May 1984, for Premier Zhao Ziyang's statement in his "Work Report to the National People's Congress."

<sup>4</sup> (U) See, for instance, Xia Yishan, "China Pushes for Total Disarmament," Beijing Review, 27 May 1985, pp. 15-19.



<sup>5</sup> (U) During the decade of the 1970s the Chinese saw "Soviet hegemonism" as the greatest threat. During the latter 1960s the Chinese had been convinced that superpower collusion was the greatest threat.





<sup>1</sup> (U) Presented by Huang Hua, Minister of Foreign Affairs, at the United Nations General Assembly's Second Special Session on Disarmament, mid-1982.

<sup>7</sup> (U) Beijing Xinhua, 5 March 1986, "News Analysis," by Chen Nanxin. This article covered Soviet leader Gorbachev's 15 January 1986 speech proposing elimination of all nuclear weapons by the year 2000, and President Reagan's 22 February 1986 speech proposing worldwide elimination of intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) by 1997. This article focused on Western European fears that an INF ban by itself would leave Western Europe open to intimidation by greatly superior Soviet conventional forces.



<sup>9</sup> (U) Minister of Foreign Affairs Wu Xueqian's fall 1983 address to the 38th Session of the UN General Assembly.



Wu Xueqian speaks to the 39th United Nations General Assembly.

Following is an excerpt from the statement by Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian at the 39th Session of the United Nations General Assembly on 26 September 1984.

China's position on nuclear disarmament can be summed up in the following three basic points:

1. Our fundamental position is the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of all nuclear weapons.

2. As a practical step for nuclear disarmament, we propose that, after the Soviet Union and the United States have taken the lead in putting an end to testing, improving and manufacturing nuclear weapons and have agreed on substantially reducing their nuclear arsenals, a broadly representative international conference should be convened with the participation of all nuclear states to work out together concrete measures for further nuclear disarmament.

3. Before all this materializes, for the sake of reducing the threat of nuclear war and showing good faith in nuclear disarmament, all nuclear states should undertake not to be the first to use nuclear weapons and unconditionally pledge not to use, or threaten to use, nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states and nuclear-free zones and should reach agreement on mutual non-use of nuclear weapons.

We support the just demand of the people of the world for the prohibition of nuclear weapons and the prevention of a nuclear war, and we appreciate all reasonable proposals conducive to nuclear disarmament and the maintenance of world peace. To promote progress in nuclear disarmament, we are ready to exchange views, within the United Nations or at other forums, on such issues as the prevention of nuclear war, cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, provided all the other nuclear states agree to do so.

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<sup>11</sup> (U) As indicated in an article in the 1 January 1986 issue of *Red Flag*, the official theoretical journal of the Communist Party Central Committee.

<sup>12</sup> (U) Statement by Premier Zhao Ziyang at the Chinese People's Rally for World Peace, Beijing, 21 March 1986, marking the United Nations International Year of Peace declared in October 1985 at the United Nations 40th anniversary General Assembly session.



Zhao Ziyang speaks at the White House as a guest of President Ronald Reagan.

Following is an excerpt from the speech by Premier Zhao Ziyang at the White House on 10 January 1984.

The world situation is at present more turbulent. The people of all countries are deeply worried about the future of the world. The United States and China, both being big countries, should be aware of their heavy responsibility for the maintenance of world peace. In the next few days, I shall hold talks with President Reagan and other leaders of your government and exchange views with them on ways to develop Sino-US relations and on international issues of common interest. We never construe the significance of Sino-US relations as being limited to ordinary bilateral relations, but regard them as an important affair affecting the overall world situation. We stand for peace not only because China needs peace, friendship and economic development, but also because people of all countries want peace, friendship and development. The amicable coexistence of China and the United States is a major factor for maintaining world peace and

stability. As long as the peoples of the world take their destiny into their own hands, it will be possible to maintain world peace and prevent a new world war.

Following is an excerpt from a speech by Premier Zhao Ziyang to the French National Assembly on 30 May 1984.

China opposes the arms race and stands for disarmament, both conventional and nuclear. China is undertaking a large-scale economic construction, seeking to change as quickly as possible the state's backward outlook and raise the people's living standards. So we are not willing and are impossible to take part in this harmful arms race. It is entirely for self-defense and opposing nuclear blackmail that China keeps a very limited number of nuclear weapons. China understands France's position of maintaining an independent nuclear force of its own in the present world situation. China has always stood for the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. This could be called a genuine, comprehensive and thorough "zero option."

On behalf of the Chinese Government, I hereby declare once again: At no time and under no circumstances will China be the first to use nuclear weapons and never will it use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states. China has always been critical of the discriminatory "Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons." We declined to accede to it. But we do not favor nuclear proliferation; nor do we engage in such proliferation by helping other countries to develop nuclear weapons. We propose that all nuclear states should undertake the commitment not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against nonnuclear states or against each other. Naturally, it is also intolerable to use a superiority of conventional arms to threaten others and this should also be condemned.

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